

false fabrication, or that fallacy called by Whitehead "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness." Another fallacy is involved, "the belief that it is not too difficult to know the truth."

Another precept which has always guided the best physicians, "So far as possible do no harm." "You can do harm by the process that is quaintly called telling the truth. You can do harm by lying." "The doctor is never privileged to lie to the patient, but he is privileged to tell the patient part of the truth."

Even though this series of essays and opinions does not give a final answer to the question, it does give much help in telling how much or how little of the truth should be told. The most valuable parts of the book are those written by nurses, religious leaders and psychiatrists. They seem to point the way toward a more cooperative effort on the part of all concerned.

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**THE YEAR BOOK OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY—1955-1956.** J. P. Greenhill, M.D., Editor, Professor of Gynecology, Cook County Graduate School of Medicine, The Year Book Publishers, Inc., 200 East Illinois Street, Chicago, 1955. 544 pages, \$6.00.

This book is the annual compendium of selected abstracts in obstetrics and gynecology issued by the publisher. It covers primarily the important contributions in the American and British literature for the months indicated, together with comments on the subject by the editor. One criticism that may be fairly leveled at this and prior volumes is that the editor really offers no critical evaluation of the various articles and no true critique of the studies presented. Thus, the book becomes merely a repository of abstracts, and a reviewer may rightly wonder for what purpose the editorial comments exist other than to give one man's viewpoint upon the subjects under discussion. However, as a reference handbook for some of the publications upon a given problem, the book serves its purpose well. It may be recommended to the busy general practitioner and specialist interested in current contributions in this field.

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**STEREOSCOPIC ATLAS OF HUMAN ANATOMY—**David L. Bassett, M.D., Associate Professor of Anatomy, Stanford University School of Medicine. Published by Sawyers, Inc., Portland, Oregon.

**Section I—Central Nervous System**—238 stereoscopic views in true color, mounted on 34 View-Master reels with 4 compact volumes of more than 400 pages of descriptive text and diagrams. Published in 1952, \$27.50.

**Section II—Head and Neck**—350 full color, three-dimensional views of the head and neck on 50 View-Master reels, with 5 compact volumes of more than 700 pages of descriptive text and diagrams. Published in 1954, \$38.50.

After more than ten years of work the first two sections of David L. Bassett's "Stereoscopic Atlas of Anatomy" are now available. It can be highly recommended to students, teachers and practitioners as a superb pictorial survey of human anatomy. It is beautifully done in three dimensional colored photographs and one achieves by inspecting the stereoscopic plates a pleasing review of anatomy.

For students who are in the process of learning anatomy, this would be an ideal way in which to review and consolidate the material in their minds. For the practicing surgeon and physician it gives him essentially the information he wants anatomically without the necessity of doing any large amount of reading. One can review a single dissection, a series of steps in a carefully planned sequence of dissections or an entire area in full perspective and in natural colors comparable to those in real life. A fully labeled sketch based upon a tracing of the original photograph accompanies each plate and furnishes a topographic guide for each view. The

views themselves are clear and unmarred, exceptionally fine photographic reproduction exists in every plate. The set is compact and the reviews are readily accessible. Regrouping of the views can be accomplished with ease and one can study any part of anatomy he desires that is included in the two sections so far published.

There is a pertinent text to accompany the reels but the labeling of the illustrations is very clear and only the pertinent information is given.

This is a new and magnificent way to present anatomy to both student and physician, alike. The only possible objection to this work would be its cost, but considering the excellence of the material and the amount of material presented, one can hardly object to that at the present time.

We will look forward to subsequent sections of this book to round out a beautiful, complete stereoscopic atlas of human anatomy.

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**PROGRESS IN NEUROLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY—An Annual Review—**Volume X, 1955. Edited by E. A. Spiegel, M.D., Professor and Head of the Department of Experimental Neurology, Temple University School of Medicine, Philadelphia. Grune and Stratton, New York, 1955. 645 pages, \$10.00.

This annually useful volume has about the same distribution of space devoted to Neurology, Neurosurgery, and Psychiatry as in the past. The coverage is complete; as a matter of fact it is a continuing matter of amazement that so much work is done in these fields each year and so little progress is made in the therapeutic sense. It is almost more than the specialist can do to keep abreast of the work, let alone the general practitioner. This book is directed at the specialist, but the style of most of the contributions is such that it is understandable by any physician. As a reference work on recent advances in the field it is a useful contribution.

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**CARDIAC DIAGNOSIS—A Physiologic Approach—**Robert F. Rushmer, M.D., Associate Professor of Physiology and Biophysics, University of Washington Medical School. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1955. 447 pages, \$11.00.

This is an excellent book written by a competent investigator who is well known for his studies on fundamental problems of cardiac physiology. The book contains many unusual and valuable features. Although its title is "Cardiac Diagnosis," the book is chiefly concerned with the application of recent advances in cardiovascular physiology to our understanding of clinical heart disease.

The writing is clear, concise and simple. The illustrations, designed by the author, are superb. By studying the illustrations alone, much of the subject matter is clearly brought out, even when dealing with complex topics. The best portions of the book are the chapters on function and regulation of the cardiovascular system. The etiology of congestive failure is especially well presented. The author rightfully hopes for an early end to the controversy between the proponents of the "backward failure" theory and the "forward failure" theory since both contain many elements of truth and neither can fully explain heart failure.

A few minor criticisms may be made. For example, quotations are not always absolutely accurate. In discussing myocardial infarction, the author describes a zone of ischemia, a zone of injury and a zone of infarction all three occurring simultaneously. Although most writers have in the past discussed myocardial infarcts in these terms, the fact is that such three zones rarely, if ever, occur simultaneously in the same subject, either in man or in the experimental animal. The author also seems to persist in the old idea that the

endocardial myocardium remains intact after myocardial infarction. While this kind of pathological picture helps to explain classic electrocardiographic theory, it is actually very rarely observed by pathologists.

If any serious criticism can be offered, it is that the book is certainly not primarily a text of Cardiac Diagnosis. But as a work on cardiovascular physiology it is probably unsurpassed. It shows the results of profound and prolonged thinking by a thoroughly competent and skilled investigator. It can be read profitably and with pleasure by anyone interested in basic problems of cardiovascular disease. Hence it is recommended to all cardiologists, internists, physiologists and pharmacologists as a modern and authoritative text.

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**COUNSELING IN MEDICAL GENETICS** — Sheldon C. Reed, Director of Dight Institute for Human Genetics, The University of Minnesota. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1955. 268 pages, \$4.00.

As marriage and family advisors, physicians are frequently consulted about genetic problems, especially those concerning the chances that a given mating will or will not result in abnormal offspring. Obstetricians, pediatricians and general practitioners are particularly apt to be asked for such advice either in advance of marriage or, more often, after a child has been born with organic defects. So important has this aspect of medical practice become that clinics for genetic counseling are being set up in increasing numbers. It is from one of these, the Dight Institute for Human Genetics, that the present slender volume originates, written by its Director, Dr. Reed.

After discussing the functions of counseling service, and briefly reviewing "a few laws" of heredity the author outlines the twenty commonest problems in separate chapters with emphasis on the statistics of each condition including the incidence in fraternal and identical twins when available, on dominance or recessiveness and the resulting probability of its occurrence or recurrence, closing with one or more illustrative case histories and the advice given. There are also provocative chapters entitled "The Ubiquitous Heterozygote" and "Don't Marry a Relative!"

Among the subjects discussed are: Mongolism; nervous system disorders; clubfoot; harelip and cleft palate; mental retardation; pyloric stenosis; fibrocystic disease of the pancreas; blood genetics; disputed paternity; skin color; convulsive seizures; allergies; schizophrenia; manic-depressive psychosis.

The book is admittedly illustrative and eclectic, and is neither profound nor exhaustive, designed to show the general methods of approach and solution of practical problems for which advice is sought, rather than to cover all of them. Unless this is understood, certain omissions are decidedly surprising. For instance, the chapter on Blood Genetics confines itself to Rh and ABO disorders and fails to mention other important ones such as hemophilia, spherocytosis, thalassemia and sickle cell anemia.

Practitioners whose advice is likely to be asked about hereditary problems of heredity will find this a handy and useful book. There is a bibliography which will enable him to look farther if he needs to do so, and a good index.